

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article, comprising:

an absorbent body enclosed between a liquid-impermeable backing sheet and a material laminate in the form of a liquid permeable, fibrous sheet of material forming a top sheet, and a liquid-permeable, porous and resilient sheet of material, forming a liquid transfer sheet lying proximal to the absorbent body,

01 wherein the material laminate has a planar extension and a thickness direction perpendicular to said planar extension,

wherein at least one of the top sheet and the liquid transfer sheet includes thermoplastic material, and the top sheet and the liquid transfer sheet are joined together ~~through the use of~~ at a plurality of laminate bonding locations on the material laminate, within which laminate bonding locations the thermoplastic material is caused to at least partially soften or melt and thereby join together the top and liquid transfer sheets ~~at a sheet joining region~~,

wherein the absorbent body includes a partially neutralised superabsorbent;
and

wherein the ~~sheet-joining regions~~ laminate bonding locations of the material laminate extend in the thickness direction of said material laminate through the top sheet and at least partially through the liquid transfer sheet, such that the liquid transfer sheet is compressed at the laminate bonding locations and liquid is more easily guided at said bonding locations towards the liquid transfer sheet, the laminate bonding locations extending at least throughout an area of the absorbent article that is arranged so as to receive a major part of body liquid to be absorbed by the absorbent article.

2. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the laminate bonding locations are disposed in two or more groups where each group includes at least two said laminate bonding locations, wherein the largest relative distance between two mutually adjacent laminate bonding locations in a given group is smaller than the smallest distance between a group and its nearest neighbouring group, wherein the material laminate includes, between the laminate bonding locations in each said group, first non-bonded laminate regions that have a greater density than second non-bonded laminate regions located between respective said groups.

3. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the partially neutralized superabsorbent has a degree of neutralisation less than 45% such

that the pH in the absorbent body of the article when wetted will lie in the range of 3.5-4.9.

4. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 2, wherein the laminate bonding locations include punctiform bonds, linear bonds, rectangular bonds or circular bonds.

5. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the top sheet has through-penetrating holes within the laminate bonding locations.

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6. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the top sheet is comprised of a nonwoven material.

7. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the top sheet is comprised of a carded, thermobonded nonwoven material.

8. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the liquid transfer sheet is a fibre wadding sheet having a thickness of 0.5-4 mm.

9. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the smallest distance x between two mutually adjacent groups of laminate bonding locations

is at least twice the size of the greatest distance y between two mutually adjacent laminate bonding locations in respective groups.

10. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 9, wherein the ratio of x/y between the distances x and y is from $2/1$ to $12/1$.

11. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article according to Claim 9, wherein x is 2-6 mm and y is 0.5-1 mm.

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12. (Original) An absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein said absorbent article comprises one of a diaper, sanitary napkin, incontinence protector, and wound dressing.

13. (Original) An absorbent article according to Claim 3, wherein the partially neutralized superabsorbent has a degree of neutralisation such that the pH in the absorbent body of the article when wetted will lie in the range of 4.1-4.7.--
